

STILLWATER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 27, 2015

Notice: These minutes reflect the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners. The official minutes were approved and will be filed with the Clerk and Recorder (MCA 7-4-2611(2)(b)) in their entirety, and the complete current month ending, along with resolutions and other supporting documents.

Present: Commissioners Dennis Shupak, Chair; and Maureen Davey, Member; Lori Dobitz, Administrative Assistant; Clifford Brophy, Sheriff; Joe Morse, Finance Specialist; Carol Arkell, DES Coordinator; Shirley Keefer, Stillwater Republican Women; and Robert Witham, Stillwater County News. Commissioner Gerald Dell is absent.

Public Comments: Public Comment on matters within the Commissioners jurisdiction pursuant to §2-3-103, MCA, public comments will be accepted on any public matter that is not scheduled on the Agenda.

Shirley Keefer - stated she would like to read the preamble of constitution of the State of Montana to the Commissioners and proceeded with the reading.

Minutes Approval: Commissioner Davey **MOVED** to approve the minutes of December 30, 2014, as presented. Commissioner Shupak **SECONDED**. Motion passed unanimously.

Courthouse Facilities

Space Project: Joe Morse, Finance Specialist, said he came up with addendum, *Debt Capacity Calculation* (DCC) supplementing the information the Commissioners received from DA Davidson titled *Estimated Mill Levy Impact Analysis* on the four alternatives/options drafted by Spectrum Group Architects. He said the DCC takes into account the total market values. The county's debt capacity is 2.5% of the taxable market value. The total debt capacity we can have at present time is \$19,471,706. Our current existing debt is \$364,844, leaving us with a total of available debt of \$19,106,862, he said. Joe explained the existing debt includes the lease of motor graders; the purchase of an asphalt grinder, Airport loans, and payments on the county attorney building and dispatch building. He said those loan payments are made each February and August so we would be reducing the current debt in February. Morse said in addition to the 4 proposals that DA Davidson prepared, a quick estimate of the impact to the top 25 taxpayers of real estate

taxable was drafted.

Commissioner Davey said the commission said in several weeks we are going to have a public hearing and in order to have a hearing we are required to advertise for 2 weeks and we talked about public comment after having the hearing. We haven't set that date yet, she said. When Commissioner Dell comes back next week, we will probably set that date.

Shirlee Keefer stated as an observation this morning she thought about the history of the courthouse. She looked at her surroundings and saw the Norton House and a big bin (storage container), and thought about the monies utilized from a federal grant that the stairs were upgraded and sidewalks put in, and the Sheriffs Department upgrades. She said she looks at the courthouse as probably lacking in efficiency. The building has settled and can that be fixed and at what costs? Would the costs be something that the residents of Stillwater County be willing to support, if in fact the courthouse was to be renovated, or demolished. You can only think about flushing the toilet with the money that was used to do the upgrades. She explained she came from a small community that salvaged bricks from a demolished building, and people bought those bricks to help build a new facility.

Shirlee Keefer said when she looks at the people that attended the Columbus information meeting, about 35 people attended, and it was advertised in the paper. Of those 35 people, there was the Sheriff's Department, Judge Jones, and other employees of the county. It is sad to say that "we the people" did not come out to see the plans and put our questions to you, the Commissioners. So we have fallen down in our responsibilities of our local government. I want to encourage all of the people that will be impacted, one way or another to attend public hearings If you can not attend, maybe send a representative.

Commissioner Davey said several years ago our Treasurer put up our delinquent tax list on the website, so people can go on there. She said her husband went on there and he also went to this meeting over here (Columbus meeting). He saw who was not paying their taxes, and some of those were people that spoke up, and some of them were employees, some of them were elected officials, but it is interesting to see the delinquent tax list. She said it shows her what some people think about paying taxes.

Shirley Keefer said which trickles down if you look at the federal level and the news media reporting how many federal employees are delinquent in their taxes. What does that say for the integrity of we the people? We each need to be responsible for our own liabilities and assets. She ended by asking who is John Galt, saying she will leave that question with the commissioners.

Commissioner Davey asked Morse about the top taxpayers estimate, inquiring if they have to pay that amount for 20 years. Morse said it is an additional amount they would pay each year, he said he used the high estimate which he said he took the worst case scenario. Commissioner Davey stated these will be filed in the Clerk & Records Office.

**Local 3877
AFSCME:**

The Commissioners received notification from the Local 3877 that Bruce Neilson will serve as representative on the local arbitration board for calendar year 2015, pursuant to Article XI, Sec 4 of the working agreement for the Road & Bridge and Solid Waste Departments.

**Human
Resources:**

New Hire: Jennifer Siegfried, Chief Communications Officer, Sheriff's Office, full-time, effective February 2, 2015. This position also serves in the capacity of Deputy DES Coordinator.

Meeting Adjourned 9:18 AM

**Claims and
Warrants:**

Claims were examined and warrants ordered drawn in the amount of \$445,880.78 and payroll in the amount of \$ 516,080.88 for a total of \$961,961.66 for the month ending January 31, 2015.